Caffeinated by Christ: The Divine Struggle of Aloe Vera

A tale of color, caffeine, and Catholic creativity in the desert

By Jonathan Olvera

In a sun-scorched corner of a forgotten desert town, where the only thing holier than the church was the espresso machine at the corner bodega, lived a man named **Aloe Vera**.

Yes, that was his real name. His mother, a devout woman with a deep love for succulents and saints, believed it sounded “refreshingly spiritual.”

And Aloe did his best to live up to it.

Known among the parishioners for his intense dedication to faith, home decor, and aggressive art projects, Aloe Vera had one mission: to beautify the local Catholic assembly hall with something so inspired, so *divinely abstract*, that even the nuns would cry.

Not from confusion this time.

Aloe lived in a modest adobe hut filled with Catholic candles, secondhand art supplies, and—most notably—**coffee**. Gallons of it. His kitchen looked like a Starbucks married a monastery.

Each morning, he'd rise before the sun, grind beans with the reverence of a monk blessing bread, and whisper, “In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Roast.” He referred to his espresso machine as **The Blessed Bean Giver**, and yes—he had baptized it with holy water. Twice.

By night, he read the Bible under starlight, sipping deeply from his chipped mug, the words of Leviticus and Luke swirling in his caffeine-fueled brain like a latte with too much foam.

It was during one such night, somewhere between his fourth cup and a deep dive into Genesis, that Aloe received what he could only describe as a **“divine download.”**

He stared up at the stars and saw a vision: six glowing squares, arranged like a heavenly game of bingo. Red, blue, yellow, black, white, and... chartreuse? (He'd had a lot of espresso.)

“It’s... it’s the separation of light from darkness!” he gasped, brushing coffee grounds off his Bible. “It’s Creation! It’s... modern art!”

He leapt up, knocking over his cat, *St. Pouncelot*, and shouted, “I must paint the Gospel in *primary colors!*”

The next day, with the desert sun blazing like a judgmental seraph, Aloe began his work.

He painted furiously, sweat pouring down his back, coffee cup clutched in one hand, brush in the other. He didn’t even notice that he’d dipped his sponge into a mug instead of his rinse cup.

That’s how he invented his signature medium: **espresso-infused acrylic**.

He created a masterpiece: six bold squares—red for blood, blue for water, yellow for holy light, black for sin, white for redemption, and the last... Well, the last one was an accident involving a creamer. But it looked holy, in a dairy sort of way.

He titled the painting:
“Genesis: But Make It Abstract.”

When he showed it to Sister Dolores, she stared in silence for a long time, squinting. Then she said, “This is either heresy... or genius. Possibly both.”

Encouraged, Aloe cleaned his brushes with reverence. He used the same sponge he’d once used to scrub the baptismal font, which he considered “holy by proxy.”

Each night he would pray:
“Lord, grant me clean water, steady hands, and better lighting in this dusty shack.”

And each morning he’d wake up and drink more coffee than any man legally should.

But time was running out.

The church was hosting its annual **Feast of the Flaming Doves**, and Aloe had promised Father Arturo he’d decorate the entire sanctuary with his “modern sacred visions.” He had three days, a dozen canvases, and exactly **zero dollars.**

Motivated equally by devotion and a desperate need for gas money, Aloe painted faster. His eyeballs twitched. His hands trembled. He was producing art so quickly that even his dreams were becoming cubist.

At one point he accidentally painted a confessional red and labeled it “Forgiveness, in Crimson.” It was sold on Etsy for $65.

Sleep-deprived and over-caffeinated, Aloe began having *visions*.

He claimed a cactus told him to “use more yellow, bro—it’s a holy color.”

He tried to repaint the Stations of the Cross in abstract form but got distracted halfway through and turned one into a Picasso-style depiction of the Last Supper, where Judas was a floating triangle.

When asked what it meant, he said, “Betrayal. Geometry. The Eucharist. It’s all connected.”

Finally, the day of the Feast arrived.

The townsfolk filed into the sanctuary. The air smelled like incense and slightly burnt coffee. Sunlight streamed through the stained glass—and splashed directly onto Aloe’s paintings, which now lined the walls, pillars, and, for some reason, the holy water font.

Each piece had a title card, like:

- **“Luke, But with Lines”**
- **“Sin and Salvation in CMYK”**
- **“The Beatitudes as Color Theory”**
- **“Thou Art”**

The crowd was silent. Some nodded thoughtfully. Others looked deeply confused.

One man muttered, “Is that supposed to be Saint Paul or a Rubik’s cube?”

Then Sister Dolores stepped forward and clapped twice.

“This,” she said, voice ringing across the pews, “is... something else.”

A pause.

“AND I LOVE IT.”

The church erupted in polite applause. Aloe bowed, nearly knocking over the Paschal candle.

He was later given a certificate for **“Outstanding Contribution to Abstract Catholic Expressionism,”** a $15 gift card to the church thrift shop, and a job offer from the Diocese Art Guild—which he politely declined because they didn’t allow espresso machines in the studio.

That night, Aloe returned home, lit his devotional candles, and opened his Bible to Psalms.

He sipped his coffee slowly, reverently, and whispered:

“The Lord is my barista. I shall not want.”